

States, others who have worked with you, and most of all, the people you have helped around the world are in your debt, and on all their behalf, I thank you. In recognition of your country's extraordinary contributions to international peacekeeping, I have notified our Congress of my intention to designate Argentina as a major non-NATO ally under our laws.

Our alliance of values goes beyond our efforts against threats to peace and security, but it begins there. It also includes a commitment to freedom and democracy, a conviction that open markets are engines for progress, a determination to give all our people a chance to contribute and be rewarded for their efforts in the future we are building, a passionate belief in the potential of every child and the right of all children to a good education, a profound concern for the environment that we hold in trust for future generations.

Near the end of his long life, General San Martin said, "All progress is the child of time." Here at his final resting place, I say to you, I believe he would applaud the progress Argentina and all the Americas have made and the direction we are taking toward a new era of peace and prosperity. But I also believe he would remind us of the work still undone, the challenges still unmet. He would urge us to press on to make progress the child of this time.

Clearly, we have the chance and the responsibility to redeem the promise of San Martin, beyond even his visionary dreams. And so, Mr. President, with high hopes, strong resolve, and generous spirits, let us take our chance and do our duty together.

Thank you, and God bless the people of Argentina and the United States.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:20 a.m. in the Plaza San Martin. In his remarks, he referred to President Carlos Saul Menem of Ar-

gentina and Mayor Fernando de la Rúa of Buenos Aires.

Statement on a Line Item Veto of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1998

October 16, 1997

I have used my line item veto authority today to cancel a provision of the 1998 Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act that provides an open season for certain Federal employees to switch retirement systems.

This line item veto will save \$854 million over 5 years by preventing a hastily conceived, undebated provision from becoming law. In addition, my action will keep agencies from having to reallocate another \$1.3 billion in limited discretionary resources to pay higher retirement benefits, rather than spend it on other priorities, such as pay increases, or essential agency needs.

I did not propose this provision in my 1998 budget, it was not the subject of public hearings, and it was not considered by either the House or the Senate. Instead, it was added at the end of the legislative process, in a House-Senate conference committee. I believe that by canceling this provision, I am using my line item veto authority in an appropriate manner.

I am committed to ensure that the Federal Government can recruit and retain the quality individuals we need to administer Federal programs. I will work with Congress to ensure that our Federal civil servants are compensated fairly for the essential work they do for the American people.

NOTE: The reports detailing the cancellations were published in the *Federal Register* on October 17. H.R. 2378, approved October 10, was assigned Public Law No. 105-61.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on a Line Item Veto of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1998

October 16, 1997

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

In accordance with the Line Item Veto Act, I hereby cancel the dollar amount of discretionary budget authority, as specified in the attached report, contained in the "Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act, 1998" (Public Law 105-61; H.R. 2378). I have determined that the cancellation of this amount will reduce the Federal budget deficit, will not impair any essential Government functions, and will not harm the national interest. This letter, together with its attachment, constitutes a special message under section 1022 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, as amended.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The reports detailing the cancellations were published in the *Federal Register* on October 17.

Remarks in the Univision Town Meeting in Buenos Aires

October 16, 1997

The President. Thank you, Jorge and Maria Elena. And I thank Univision for giving us the chance to have this conversation. I want to thank all the young people here in Buenos Aires and joining us from Miami and Los Angeles for being a part of this.

I am near the end of a remarkable trip which my wife, Hillary, and I, a distinguished group from our Cabinet and the United States Congress, have taken to Latin America to celebrate the changes that have taken place: the moves from dictatorship to democracy; the moves from closed economies, high inflation, and big debt to stability and growth; the moves that are bringing all of us closer together.

I came here to talk about what we have to do to prepare for the 21st century, how we have to work together to seize the promise of education and technology, to shoulder the burdens of preserving our environment and dealing with new security threats from drugs and crime and terrorism. Most of all, I came to reaffirm the commitment of the United States to be a good partner with Latin America as we move ahead and especially to emphasize the fact that our fastest growing minority of Americans are Hispanic-Americans. We are growing together in more ways than one, and today I hope we'll talk about what we can do to build the kind of future we all want, together.

Maria Elena Salinas. Thank you very much, Mr. President. I'd like to ask you for your permission to introduce your wife. Mrs. Hillary Clinton is here with us today. Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton, of course, has been accompanying Mr. Clinton throughout this Latin American tour, but she herself has traveled through several Latin American countries promoting programs to benefit women and also programs that alleviate poverty. So we want to welcome her especially. And many Latin Americans of course read your weekly column. Welcome.

[At this point, moderator Jorge Ramos introduced a National University of Buenos Aires law student from Colombia.]

Antidrug Efforts

Q. Mr. President, can you show the world a reduction in drug consumption which is proportional to the reduction of production and cultivation of drugs?

The President. I think the short answer to that question is yes, we can do that, we can show that a lot of our drug consumption is going down. Overall drug consumption has been going down in America for the last several years. But to be fair, we have one big, troubling thing, which is that drug consumption among our younger people, people under 18, is still going up. And since in America children of school age now are the largest number they have ever been, that's a problem we have to continue to work on.

So the answer is, we've made some progress. We have to do much more. I just secured from the Congress a program to dra-